Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (withdrawn) A method for preserving the ratio of the tensile strength in the length direction to the tensile strength in the breadth direction of a mat of filaments which is in displacement, passing from one conveyor to another, characterized in that the mat is subjected to a vacuum applying it to a support during the passage from the first conveyor to a movable element.

2. (withdrawn) The method as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the mat is slowed while it passes from the first conveyor to the movable element.

3. (withdrawn) The method as claimed in claim 1, characterized in that the first conveyor is that onto which the filaments for forming the mat are deposited.

4. (currently amended) An installation for producing a nonwoven fabric, comprising a spun-bonding tower depositing a mat of filaments onto a first conveyor, the

first conveyor being arranged to deliver the mat to transfer means for causing the mat of filaments to pass onto a first movable conveying element for supporting the mat during consolidation, the mat being free of prior consolidation, and consolidation means for consolidating the mat supported on the first movable conveying element by entanglement, characterized in that the transfer means for causing the mat of filaments to pass onto the first movable conveying element comprise a second movable conveying element having a device for the application of a vacuum which maintains the mat on an outer surface of the second movable conveying element, the first conveyor and the first movable conveying element each include an elongate generally flat run along which the mat is conveyed and supported, ~~and~~ the first conveyor is more air-permeable than the first movable conveying element, and the consolidation means include fluid impingement of the mat with the lesser air-permeability of the first movable conveying element more fully supporting the mat as compared with the first conveyor to improve the filament entanglement by the fluid impingement and to thereby enhance consolidation and preservation of the ratio of the tensile strength in the length direction to the tensile strength in the breadth direction.

5. (previously presented) The installation as claimed in claim 4, characterized in that the second movable element is a drum or a conveyor.

Claim 6 (cancelled).

7. (currently amended) The installation as claimed in ~~claim 6~~ claim 4, characterized in that the first conveyor has an air permeability of between 500 and 1100 CFM (14.1 and 31 m3/min).

8. (previously presented) The installation as claimed in claim 7, characterized in that the first movable conveying element has an air permeability of between 50 and 500 CFM (1.41 and 14.1 m3/min).

9. (previously presented) The installation as claimed in claim 4, characterized in that the first conveyor is a multilayer cloth, while the first movable conveying element is a single layer cloth.

10. (previously presented) The installation as claimed in claim 4, characterized in that the first conveyor delivers the mat directly to the transfer means.

11. (previously presented) The installation as claimed in claim 4, characterized in that the first movable conveying element has a suction device which cooperates with the transfer means, in order to facilitate the passage of the mat from the means to the first movable conveying element.

12. (previously presented) The installation as claimed in claim 4, characterized in that said installation is constructed and arranged to preserve the ratio of the tensile strength in the length direction to the tensile strength in the breadth direction of said mat of filaments which is in displacement, coming from said spun-bonding tower and going to said means for consolidation by entanglement.

13. (previously presented) The installation as claimed in claim 4, characterized in that said conveyor operates at a conveyor linear speed to convey said mat of filaments and said second movable conveying element operates at a conveying element linear speed to cause said mat of filaments to pass onto said first movable conveying element, and said second conveying element linear speed is less than said conveyor linear speed.

14. (previously presented) An installation for producing a nonwoven fabric comprising a spun-bonding tower depositing a mat of filaments onto a first conveyor, transfer means for causing the mat of filaments to pass from the first conveyor onto a first movable conveying element for supporting the mat during consolidation, the mat being free of prior consolidation, and consolidation means for impinging fluid on the mat and consolidating the mat as it is supported on the first movable conveying element, characterized in that the transfer means for causing the mat of filaments to pass onto the first movable conveying element comprise a second movable conveying element having a device for the application of a vacuum which maintains the mat on an outer surface of the second movable conveying element, the first conveyor and the first movable conveying element each having an elongate generally flat run along which the mat is conveyed and supported, and the first conveyor is more air-permeable than the first movable conveying element to more fully support the mat during consolidation to improve the filament entanglement by the impinging fluid, and to thereby enhance consolidation and preservation of the ratio of the tensile

strength in the length direction to the tensile strength in the breadth direction.

Claim 15 (cancelled).

16. (currently amended) The installation as claimed in ~~claim 15~~ claim 14, wherein the conveyor operates at a conveyor linear speed to convey the mat of filaments and the second movable conveying element operates at a conveying element linear speed to cause said mat of filaments to pass onto the first movable conveying element, and the second movable conveying element linear speed is less than the conveyor linear speed.